Singing and Listening to Music

BY:

MUFTÎ ABDUR RAÛF SAKHRAWÎ

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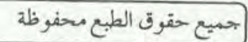
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Ph : 0092-21-2760374
: 0092-21-2761671
Fax : 0092-21-2725673
E-mail : zamzam01@cyber.net.pk
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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Introductory Note

My master, support and *maulâ* (leader), Mufti-A'zam of Pakistan, Hadrat Maulânâ Muftî Muhammad Shafî' Sâhib رحمه الله, the founder of Dârul Ulûm Karachi has written a book (regarding music) in the Arabic language entitled, *'Kashful-inâ an wasfil-ghinâ'*. In it, Hadrat رحمه الله has, mentioned the laws of the Qur'ân and Sunnah and the views of the Ulamâ of the Ummah regarding music in great detail. This book is very detailed and comprehensive.

Maulânâ Abdul-Muiz Sâhib has translated it into simple Urdu and has written explanatory notes at certain places. He has added many new proofs. Those objections which are raised on music not being permissible, has been answered sufficiently and in a well-researched manner. In this way, this book in the Urdu language is unique. No other book so comprehensive and detailed has passed my gaze.

This book comprises of approximately four hundred and fifty pages. It is called *'Islam aur-musîqî'* (Islam and Music). The person who wants to study all the detailed and argumentative discussions should study this book.

I felt that due to the *ilmî tahqîq* (scholarly research), necessary speech on *jarh wa ta'dîl* (discussions regarding the chain or narrators in Ahâdîth) and other discussions had made the book quite voluminous. For the general layman and for those Muslims involved in other matters, to take benefit from this book was difficult.

Therefore I have attempted to write a summary of it and I have also added certain points so that, in one sitting, every person can read Nabî's ﷺ sayings regarding music, and can understand it being a sin. The reality of the famous objections of those who regard music as permissible and their proofs being without weight can also become clear, so

that with complete confidence, every person can stay away from the sin of music and singing. May Allâh ﷻ save all Muslims from this sin. Âmîn.

Abdur-Raûf Sakhrawî
29 - 12- 1416 A.H.



نحمده ونصلي علي رسوله الكريم محمدٍ وآله واصحابه اجمعين

Music

Today, in our society music and singing has become very common. The houses, streets and market places echo with the sound of music and T.V. songs. The television, V.C.R. and antenna dish have made it reach high heights. Some people, at wedding occasions, raise the sound of the music so that the whole neighbourhood, in fact, sometimes people of the whole region can hear the music, singing and T.V. shows. No matter whether someone is performing Salâh, reciting Qur'ân Karîm, making Zikr, studying or resting, they want everyone to remember each and every song.

Those involved in selling musical cassettes, other businessman and people in hotels keep the music blaring very loudly. Similarly, taxi and bus-drivers keep the music on during their journeys. At airports and in aeroplanes, music is heard with a low volume. The result is that music being a sin has left the hearts of general Muslims and religious guides have become w eary and are starting to discard telling people about it.

There was such an era that if any non-Muslim had to pass a Masjid with his marriage procession which had music and singing, the Muslims would regard it as dishonour to the Masjid and would fight them. They would not withhold from even giving their lives. However, today, Muslims and their children even at the time of Salâh, in front of the Masâjid, play immoral songs without any concern. In fact now, some people regard singing and music to be the food for the *rûh* (soul) and are making effort to term it as permissible, which is a very dangerous condition and which can destroy one's îmân. Therefore this thought came to mind that I briefly gather the sayings and commands of Allâh ﷻ and Rasûlullâh ﷺ and present them to the Muslims so that they can read it,

and after being warned, can stay away from it and save other Muslims from it as well, and until now whatever sins have been committed, they can sincerely repent.

In the Light of the Qur'ân, Music is Harâm (Prohibited)

At four places in the Qur'ân, singing has been prohibited:

From amongst them, one is the following verse.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْتَرِيْ لَهْوَ الْحَدِيْثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَّيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا أُولئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِيْنٌ

"Some people are such that they buy such speech which makes them negligent (of Allâh ﷻ), so that they can lead astray (others) from the path of Allâh ﷻ without understanding and so that they can take this (correct path) as a mockery. For these people, there is a disgraceful punishment." *(Sûrah Luqmân verse no.6)*

Note: In this verse *'lahwal-hadîth'* refers to music. Thus when Hadrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ûd ؓ was asked regarding this verse he said, "I take an oath by that Being who has no other partner, it means music."
He repeated this statement thrice (so that the questioner could understand properly).

Hadrat Ibn Abbâs ؓ said, "By *'lahwal-hadîth'* is meant music and those types of things."

It is narrated from Hadrat Hasan Basrî ؒ that the above mentioned verse was revealed with regard to music. In it *'lahwal-hadîth'* means music and other things like it, e.g. story-telling the whole night, jokes, nonsensical talks, etc. In fact, every such thing which would make one negligent of Allâh's ﷻ worship and remembrance is included in it.

The meaning of the verse is that there are some people who desire such things which make one negligent of Allâh ﷻ i.e. they like listening to music, singing and other things like it. This action of theirs is equal to misleading others from the

straight path. In fact it is equivalent to mocking this firm Dîn (religion), since the purpose of Dîn is for man to connect himself to Allâh ﷻ and to become engaged in His worship, whereas music etc. is completely contrary to it.

Therefore, for such people is a disgraceful punishment. Those things in which warnings of punishment are given are not permissible. Therefore, singing and listening to music are *harâm* (impermissible).

Also, from the above verse, due to the circumstances of revelation, we come to know that music and story-telling is contrary to Islam. In the time of Rasûlullâh ﷺ, there was a person from amongst the *kuffâr* (disbelievers), by the name of Nadr Ibn Hârith, who was severely opposed to Nabî ﷺ and was his staunch enemy. He wanted people not to turn their attention to the Qur'ân. For business reasons, he would travel to Persia. There, he would buy stories of Rustam and Isfandiyâr.

In Makkah Mukarramah, he would gather the people and would recite to them, so that people would stay away from accepting the Qur'ân and Islam. This enemy of Islam would say to the people, "This messenger tells you stories of the nations of Âd and Thamûd. I tell you stories of the famous battles and warriors of Iran. You people say! There are two types of stories. Which ones are more enjoyable?" Once he purchased a singing slave-girl. When he saw anyone being attracted to Islam, he would bring that person to his house, feed him and make him listen to her singing. He would challenge the Qur'ân and ask, "Tell me? Is enjoyment and fascination in music or in the Qur'ân?" (العياذ بالله)

The one and only purpose of this question was so that people become more engaged in story-telling and music and so that they have a dislike for Qur'ânic guidance. Therefore this verse was revealed regarding him. Through this verse, Allâh ﷻ has regarded as *harâm* (prohibited) every such thing which makes one unmindful of Allâh's ﷻ worship and His

remembrance, whether it be story-telling, jokes, nonsense, or singing and music - all are not permissible. *(Adapted from Tafsîr Kashfur-Rahmân vol. 2 p.655)*

Thus, from the above mentioned verse, other verses and many statements of Rasûlullâh ﷺ, it becomes abundantly clear that T.V. shows, singing, music, drums, fiddles, harmonium, jhânj, discos, drama, false stories, novels, films and albums of people naked or half-naked etc. are all not permissible. Becoming involved in it or encouraging others to do it is without doubt a sin.

This is also known that from the time of Rasûlullâh ﷺ until now, dancing and music has been the mild pacified sword of the enemies of Islam, which they have always used to destroy Islam and the Muslims. Today, by showing programs of nudity, immoral dramas, singing and dancing, robberies and killing by means of the T.V., V.C.R. and satellite dishes, this purpose is being attained so that the Muslims become involved in it and become drowned in pleasures and enjoyments thus leaving their Dîn (religion) and become negligent of *âkhirah* (hereafter) and so that Muslims become their slaves and can never combat them. Muslims should ensure that they save themselves from the hidden weapons and silent swords of the enemies of Islam.

Some of the sayings of Nabî ﷺ regarding music are as follows:

The Purpose of Rasûlullâh's ﷺ Coming

Hadrat Alî ؓ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Verily, I have been sent (in the world) to destroy flutes (i.e. musical instruments)." *(Nailul-Autâr)*

Hadrat Umâmah Bâhilî ؓ has narrated that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Verily, Allâh ﷻ has sent me as a guidance and mercy for the Muslims and He has commanded me to destroy the

flute, the drum, the cross and objects of *jâhiliyah* (the days of Ignorance). *(Abû Dâwud)*

Hadrat Ibn Abbâs ﷺ has narrated that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "I have been commanded to destroy the drum and the flute." *(Jamul-Jawâmi')*

Note: It is clear from these three Ahâdîth that just as the purpose of Nabî's ﷺ coming was to destroy *kufr* and *shirk* and to invite towards the *tauhîd* (the oneness of Allâh ﷻ), he was also sent to break and completely destroy drums, fiddles and all other musical instruments.

Now let us ponder that the personality, who we believe in and whose name we take, was sent to destroy music and singing, whereas we are involved in singing, dancing and music, thus going contrary to the very purpose of Nabî's ﷺ coming. How sad and dangerous is this! Our Îmân and Dîn demands from us that while following in the footsteps of Nabî ﷺ, we abstain from listening to any type of music and singing and we should totally discard this pastime.

Forms Will Be Changed

Hadrat Abû Hurairah ﷺ has narrated that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Close to Qiyâmah, the forms of some people of my Ummah will be transformed and changed into that of monkeys and swines." The Sahâbah ﷺ asked, "O Rasûlullâh ﷺ! Will these people be Muslims? Nabî ﷺ said, "Yes, they will testify that there is none worthy of worship but Allâh ﷻ and that I am Allâh's ﷻ messenger and they will also fast." The Sahâbah ﷺ asked, "O Rasûlullâh ﷺ! Then why will this happen to them? Nabî ﷺ said, "These people will become accustomed to musical instruments and singing girls and they will drink wine. One night, they will be involved in drinking wine and in futilities and amusements. In the morning, their features will be transformed." *(Ibn Hibbân)*

Hadrat Sahl bin Sa'd ؓ has narrated that Nabî ﷺ said, "In this Ummah, there will be incidents of people being swallowed in the ground, forms changing and rain of stones." Someone asked, "O Rasûlullâh ﷺ! When will this happen?" Rasûlu llâh ﷺ said, "When singing girls become common and wine is regarded as *halâl*." *(Ibn Mâjah)*

Hadrat Imrân Ibn Husain ؓ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "In this Ummah also, there will be such incidents where people will be swallowed by the earth, forms will be changed and stones will rain down." Someone asked, "O Rasûlullâh ﷺ! When will this occur?" Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "When singing girls and music becomes common and when wine will be consumed in abundance." *(Tirmidhî)*

The Meaning of Maskh (Transformation)

In these Ahâdîth, what severe warnings have been mentioned regarding singing and listening to music! In the previous Ummahs, due to the disobedience of the Banî Isrâîl, they were punished by being changed into monkeys and swines. Warning of this punishment has been sounded for those who sing and who listen to music from the Ummah of Nabî ﷺ. Therefore, we should abstain from listening to music and from singing. However, regarding the changing of forms of those involved in music into monkeys and swines, there are two views of the Ulamâ.

Some Ulamâ say that these people's forms will, in reality, change into the forms of swines and monkeys and they will not remain anymore as human beings. Most probably, this will happen during that era when the major signs of Qiyâmah become apparent. This will also be one major sign.

Others say that the literal meaning of *maskh* (transformation) is not meant. Here the *majâzî* (figurative) meaning is taken and this refers to two qualities which are created by music:

1) Immodesty and shamelessness.

2) Mimicry and imitation.

The original owners of immodesty and shamelessness are swines and the original owners of mimicry and imitation are monkeys. Therefore, due to the sin of singing and listening to music, immodesty, shamelessness, mimicry, imitation is created. Thus today, these two qualities can be witnessed in those involved in music. In these people, there is no sign of modesty and shame and day-and-night they are involved in imitating others and in following fashions, as if internally they have become complete monkeys and pigs. May Allâh ﷻ protect us!

Saving Oneself from the Sounds of Music

Hadrat Nâfi رحمه الله narrates that Hadrat Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه once heard the sound of a flute being played by a shepherd. He placed his fingers in both his ears and turned his conveyance from the path. He then continued to ask, "Can the sound be heard?" until I said to him, "Now there no sound can be heard." He then removed his fingers from his ears and came back on that path. He then said, "I saw Nabî ﷺ doing the same when he heard the sound of the shepherd's flute." *(Abû Dâwud)*

Note: The way of Allâh's ﷻ servants who fear Him is that never mind not listening to music, etc. intentionally, even if unintentionally they happened to hear it, they plugged their fingers in their ears. We should also follow in their footsteps.

Sound of Music Falling on the Ears Unintentionally

Today the sounds of music have become so common that no market place and no street is free from it. Wherever one goes, the sounds of music falls into one's ears. When one travels by bus or taxi, the cassettes of music are played. In spite of stopping them, they do not switch it off and the journey is also unavoidable. In this case, the ruling is that the sin of listening to music is based on intention i.e.

intentionally listening to music will constitute a sin and unintentionally, if the sounds of music fall on one's ears, there is no sin.

Hadrat Ibn Umar ﷺ, did not have a choice and did not intentionally listen to music. It was not necessary for him to cover his ears. However, due to his *taqwâ* (piety) he covered his ears and more so because Nabî ﷺ covered his ears at such an instance. Thus, today also, if one covers his ears due to the sound of music etc., it will be better. However, if someone does not cover his ears and goes pass the place or if someone is sitting on his conveyance and he does not listen to music intentionally, there is no sin on him.

The Instruments of Music are Harâm (Prohibited)

Hadrat 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrates that Nabî ﷺ said, "Verily Allâh ﷻ has made wine, gambling, drums and guitars *harâm*. Also, every intoxicant is *harâm*." *(Abû Dâwud)*

Hadrat Ibn Abbâs ﷺ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Verily Allâh ﷻ has made wine, gambling and drums harâm. Also, every intoxicant is *harâm*." *(Abû Dâwud)*

The following is narrated from Hadrat Ibn Abbâs ﷺ:
"Drums are *harâm*, wine is *harâm* and flutes are *harâm*."

Note: From these Ahâdîth, we learn that the usage of drums, guitars and flutes are *harâm*. These instruments have only been mentioned as an example. The same law apllies to ali other musical instruments.

Anyhow, singing is a separate sin and using instruments together with this singing is another sin. We should abstain from both.

The Salâh of a Singer is Not Accepted

Hadrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ narrates that one night Nabî ﷺ heard the sound of someone singing. He remarked thrice,

"His Salâh is not accepted, his Salâh is not accepted, his Salâh is not accepted." *(Nailul-Autâr)*

Note: Singing and listening to music is such a wretched action that if one involved in them, performs his salâh, although his obligation is discharged, his Salâh will not be accepted and he will not receive rewards for it. The Hadîth has already being mentioned, in which it is stated, that the one who listens to music in spite of being a Muslim, reading Salâh and fasting, his form will be changed into that of a monkey and swine. Therefore those involved in music should reflect on their end result.

To Take Enjoyment from Music is Kufr

Hadrat Abû Hurairah ﷺ has narrated that Nabî ﷺ said, "Listening to music is a sin, and to sit in gatherings of music is disobedience and to take enjoyment from it is kufr." *(Nailul-Autâr)*

Note: Kufr in the hadîth refers to *'kufrân-e-ni'mat'* (being ungrateful). This means that Allâh ﷻ has given man limbs so that man follows His orders and so that man can use all his energies and abilities for Allâh's ﷻ worship. However instead of doing these things, man uses these limbs in the disobedience to Allâh ﷻ and in sin. This is the greatest form of ingratitude and non appreciation. Therefore abstain from listening to music and from singing.

Income from Singing is Harâm

Hadrat 'Umar ﷺ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "The income of a singing girl and her singing are both *harâm*." *(Tabrânî)*

Hadrat Alî ﷺ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ and prohibited their buying and selling and said, "Their income is *harâm*".

Nabî ﷺ said, "I have been sent to destroy musical instruments. (Thereafter he said) "The income of singing

males and females are *harâm* and the income of prostitutes is also *harâm*. Allâh ﷻ has made a law that the body which has been nourished by *harâm* wealth will not enter Jannah." *(Kanzul Ummâl)*

In another narration, Nabî ﷺ has mentioned, "The income of singing girls is *harâm*. Listening to their singing and looking at them is also *harâm*. Their income is *harâm* just as taking money for selling a dog is *harâm*. That meat which is nourished by *harâm* income, the fire of Jahannam is more deserving of it." *(Al-Mu'jamul Kabîr)*

Note: From these Ahâdîth, we come to learn a few points:

1) Singing is *harâm*.
2) Taking and giving money for music is *harâm*.
3) Nabî ﷺ was sent to break musical instruments.
4) Listening to music and looking at singing girls are *harâm*.
5) That body nourished by *harâm* income will not go to Jannah, it is only worthy of Jahannam.

Today, in the film industry, singers take exorbitant fees for their singing. This is one of the highest sources of income. Notwithstanding this, *harâm* fees will remain *harâm*. Therefore, when singing is *harâm*, its remuneration is *harâm*, looking at singing women with desire is *harâm* and listening to it is also *harâm*. Today, this sin has become so common due to television, videos and satellite dishes. How sad is it now that music being a sin is leaving the minds of Muslims.

All Muslims should make effort to stay away from all the forms of this sin.

Hypocrisy is Created due to Music

Hadrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Music creates hypocrisy in the heart just as water causes crops to grow." *(Baihaqî)*

Hadrat Abû Hurairah ﷺ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "The love of music creates hypocrisy in the heart just as water causes crops to grow." *(Dailamî)*

Hadrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Stay away from listening to music! This is because it creates hypocrisy in the heart just as water causes crops to grow." *(Sasrî)*

Note: From these Ahâdîth, we learn that by singing and by listening to music, hypocrisy is created in the heart. The reality of hypocrisy is that outwardly and inwardly there is a difference.

The person involved in music is generally in one of two conditions:

1. In spite of being a Muslim, he leaves out Salâh, fasting and other laws of Dîn. He openly sings and listens to music. In this condition, he is the worst type of *fâsiq* (open sinner) and *fâjir* (immoral person). Today, many Muslims involved in music are of this type.

2. Outwardly, he is punctual in his Salâh and fasting and he also fulfils the other commandments. However he also gains enjoyment from music and singing. In this case, he is not as he outwardly seems. Outwardly, he shows possessing love of Allâh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ since he fulfils the outward actions, but his heart is filled with music and songs, due to which he overlooks and does not care about the anger and prohibition of Allâh ﷻ and Rasûlullâh ﷺ. The love of music in his heart is more than the love of Allâh ﷻ and Rasûlullâh ﷺ, and there is hypocrisy.

Also, music and songs creates such negligence in man that the desire and love of understanding, pondering and

practicing on the Qur'ân Karîm comes to an end. In fact, a person's sexual desires are slowly aroused and eventually he becomes involved in evil glancing, sexual misdemeanours, and the evil act of fornication and adultery, which is completely contrary to the teachings of the Qur'ân Karîm. The Qur'ân Karîm prevents a person from following his base desires, commands one to be modest and shameful. It teaches one to control his lustful inclinations and to abstain from immorality and fornication.

In this way, music, in complete contradiction to the Qur'ân Karîm, invites one to follow Shaytân which is complete hypocrisy. Therefore, every Muslim should save himself from hypocrisy in his Dîn and îmân (belief) and from the dangerous poison of Shaytân. The only solution for this is to repent from this sin of dancing and music and to save oneself from this sin at all times, especially at the times of marriage.

Molten Lead in the Ears

Hadrat Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "The person who sits by a singing girl so that he could hear her singing, molten lead will be poured into his ears on the day of Qiyâmah." *(Ibn Asâkir)*

Note: Where one important purpose of films, whether seen in cinema halls or on television, is to look at the singing women and to increase one's sexual lust by seeing their beauty, another important purpose is to listen to their singing. Actually the means of listening to music is much more than seeing evil. Music has become so common due to radios and tape recorder cassettes. In any condition, singing and listening to music is a sin. One might not see any harm in the few days of this worldly life. However, on the day of Qiyâmah the result will be that molten lead will be placed in one's ears. Remember that the day of Qiyâmah, *hisâb* (reckoning), punishment and reward are true. Now ponder over this!

Two Accursed Voices

Hadrat Anas ﷺ and Hadrat Âishah *radiallâhu anhâ* narrate that Nabî ﷺ said, "There are two sounds which are accursed in this world and the hereafter:

1) The sound of music at the time of happiness;
2) The sound of crying and the voice of mourners at the time of a calamity. *(Bazzâz)*

Note: Generally, two conditions come upon every person. One is the condition of sorrow and the other is the condition of happiness. In each condition, there is an act of worship. In sorrow, one should have *sabr* (patience) and should be pleased with Allâh's ﷻ wish. In happiness, one should be grateful to Allâh ﷻ. *Sabr* and *Shukr* are very great acts of ibâdah (worship). The Qur'ân and Hadîth are replete with its rewards.

Shaytân is man's eternal enemy. At every opportunity, he attempts to divert man from worship and to involve him in sin, thus depriving him of reward and Allâh's ﷻ pleasure. Here too, he does the same. At the time of sorrow, he has involved man in striking his chest, tearing his collar and crying in such a way which exceeds the bounds. At the time of happiness, he has involved man in singing and dancing. These actions in both conditions are major sins. Therefore, there is curse upon it. The way of salvation is that one should abstain from music and mourning in an incorrect manner.

Two Foolish and Immoral Voices

Hadrat Abdur Rahmân Ibn Auf ﷺ says that Rasûlullâh ﷺ caught hold of my hand. I went with him to his son, Hadrat Ibrâhîm ﷺ. At that moment, Hadrat Ibrâhîm ﷺ was in the throes of death. Nabî ﷺ lifted him onto his lap where he remained until he passed away. Thereafter Nabî ﷺ removed him from his lap and began crying. I said, "O Rasûl of Allâh ﷺ! You are crying, whereas you have prevented us from

crying." Nabî ﷺ answered, "I did not prevent you from crying. However I prevent you from two foolish and immoral voices. One is the voice of *shayt̲ânî* music and pastimes at the time of happiness. The other is the hitting of faces, tearing of collars and the sounds of excessive crying at the times of difficulty." *(Hâkim)*

Note: At the time of someone's demise, to cry within limits and to shed tears due to his separation is proven from Rasûlullâh ﷺ. There is no prohibition in this. What is prohibited is that crying which exceeds the bounds, in which faces are scratched, chests are hit, collars are torn and lamenting is done. At the time of marriages or other happy occasions, to play music and other amusements is also a sin, since they are contrary to the guidance of Allâh ﷻ and Rasûlullâh ﷺ and makes one negligent of the *âkhirah* (hereafter).

Prohibition of Using Bells

H̲ad̲rat Abû Hurairah ؓ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Bells are the flutes of Shayt̲ân." *(Muslim, Abû Dâwud)*

H̲ad̲rat Abû Hurairah ؓ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "The angels do not accompany such a group in which there is a dog or bell." *(Ibid)*

H̲ad̲rat Haut Ibn Abdul Uzzâ ؓ narrates that a caravan from Egypt came to Nabî ﷺ. On their animals bells were tied. Nabî ﷺ commanded them to cut off the bells because he regarded bells as *makrûh* (disliked) and he said, "The angels do not remain with such a group in which there are bells." *(Musaddad)*

Once a young girl was brought in the presence of H̲ad̲rat Âishah *rad̲iallâhu anhâ*. She was wearing small bells which were tinkling. H̲ad̲rat Âishah *rad̲iallâhu anhâ* said, "Do not bring her to me as long as you do not cut off these bells,

because I have heard Rasûlullâh ﷺ saying, "The angels do not enter the house in which there are bells." *(Abû Dâwud)*

Note: From these Ahâdîth, we learn that Nabî ﷺ did not only prohibit musical instruments, but also prohibited tying bells since these are included amongst musical instruments, and assist in singing and dancing. In fact, without these bells, there is no life in dancing. Included in this prohibition is placing bells on the necks of animals and tying them on one's feet. Similarly some women use such bracelets and anklets which emit sounds. They should abstain from this. However, it is correct to use plain bracelets or anklets which do not emit sounds.

Nabî's ﷺ Curse for those Listening to Music

Hadrat Abû Hurairah ؓ has narrated that we were on journey with Nabî ﷺ when he heard the sounds of two men singing. One was reciting poems and the other was answering him. Nabî ﷺ said, "Look! Who are these people?" The people said, "It is so-and-so." Nabî ﷺ cursed them and said, "O Allâh! Overturn them in Jahannam and thrust them into the fire." *(Majma'uz Zawâid)*

From the above mentioned verses and Ahâdîth, it is clear that singing and listening to music is *harâm* and there is no doubt in them being impermissible. Every male and female Muslim should stay away from these sins.

Some people proffer strange proofs to prove the permissibility of music. Listening to this, some simple-minded Muslims become confused. Briefly, these proofs will be discussed.

The Proofs which hold no Weight of those who regard Music as Permissible

1) The Permissibility of Singing on the Day of 'Îd

Hadrat Âishah *radiallâhu anhâ* says that Rasûlullâh ﷺ came to me. At this time, two small girls were sitting by me and were singing a song regarding the battle of Bughâth. Rasûlullâh ﷺ lay on the bed and turned his face away. In the meanwhile, Hadrat Abû Bakr ؓ came. He began reprimanding me and said, "This *shaytâni* song in front of Nabî ﷺ!?" Nabî ﷺ turned to him and said, "Leave them". When Hadrat Abû Bakr ؓ began doing other work, I made a sign to these two girls, who then went out. This was the day of 'Îd." *(Bukhârî)*

In another narration of Bukhârî Sharîf, Hadrat Âishah *radiallâhu anhâ* says that when Hadrat Abû Bakr ؓ came, the two Ansârî girls were sitting by me singing the poems which the Ansâr used to say during the battle of Bughâth. These two girls were not professional singing girls. When Hadrat Abû Bakr ؓ saw them, he said, "This *shaytânî* songs in Nabî's ﷺ house!?" This incident occurred on the day of 'Îd. Thereafter Nabî ﷺ said, "O Abû Bakr! For every nation, there is a day of 'Îd, today is our 'Îd." *(Bukhârî)*

Note: Some people regard singing and listening to music as permissible based on the above Ahâdîth. They say that on the day of 'Îd, in the house of Rasûlullâh ﷺ, girls were singing and he ﷺ gave permission, so it will be permissible for us to listen to music and sing at marriage ceremonies and occasions of joy.

However, to deduce proof of permissibility from these Ahâdîth is not correct since there is no clear mention of music in these Ahâdîth. Mention is only made of reciting the hymns and poems of the battle of Bughâth with tune. These poems have nothing to do with music. The battle of Bughâth is the name of that battle which took place between the Aus

and Khazraj tribes, three years before Nabî ﷺ migrated to Madînah Munawwarah. The poems which these girls were reciting were those which used to raise the spirits of bravery and manliness, which is beneficial in one way and an aid in war. Also, these girls were still immature and not *mukallaf* (liable), nor were they paid singing girls. For this reason, Rasûlullâh ﷺ did not prohibit them. If these poems included impermissible and erotic contents, like music, then Nabî ﷺ would never have remained silent, but would have definitely stopped them. Hadrat Abû Bakr ؓ stopped these girls as it was common knowledge amongst the Sahâbah ؓ that singing was impermissible and a satanic act. He therefore felt that these poems were similar to songs and prevented them, upon which Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Leave them. Today is the day of 'Îd. Overlook them".

The crux of this is that the permissibility of music cannot be proven from here.

Announcing a Nikâh by means of a Duff (Tambourine)

Hadrat Rubayyi' *radiallâhu anhâ* says, "When my *rukhsatî* (departure of bride to her husband's home) took place, then Nabî ﷺ came and sat in the same manner as you are sitting in front of me. During this time, some of our girls started hitting the duff and began reciting a eulogy of my father and grandfather who had been killed. While doing this, one girl recited the following verse (the translation of which is) "And we have such a Nabî ﷺ who knows the matters of tomorrow." Nabî ﷺ on hearing this said, "Leave out this. Continue what you were saying before." *(Bukhârî)*

Note: Hadrat Rubayyi' ؓ is that Sahâbiyyah whose father and two uncles, Hadrat Muâdh ؓ and Abdur Rahmân Ibn Auf ؓ were martyred during the battle of Badr. These girls were reciting such poems which mentioned the bravery and courage of their father and uncles. Since knowledge of the unseen is a special quality of Allâh ﷻ and one girl had attributed, in one of her stanzas, this knowledge of the

unseen to Nabî ﷺ, he prohibited her from reciting that line. Together with this, these girls who were reciting the poetry were of a young-age. They were not mature as yet. Also they were reciting poems of war at the time of Nikâh with the duff.

Hadrat Âishah *radiallâhu anhâ* narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Announce the Nikâh, perform the Nikâh in the Masjid and at this time, strike the duff." *(Tirmidhî)*

Note: In these two Ahâdîth and some other Ahâdîth, mention is made of striking the duff at the time of Nikâh. The purpose of this was to announce and inform of the Nikâh. For this reason, the Ulamâ have stated that at the occasion of Nikâh, it is permissible to strike the duff to inform of the Nikâh, as long as no impermissible act is committed with it. The duff should be struck giving off such a sound by which the necessity of announcing the Nikâh will be fulfilled. It is also not necessary to announce the Nikâh by striking the duff. If by any other means, people can be informed, this will be sufficient. In fact, some Ulamâ have also prohibited announcing the Nikâh by striking the duff. *(Imdâdul Fatâwâ vol.2 p.238)* This is why there is precaution in not using the duff for the announcement of Nikâh. Anyhow, all this detail is with regard to striking the duff at the time of announcing the Nikâh.

Some people, due to the permission regarding the usage of the duff at the time of Nikâh, have made an analogy to present day musical instruments such as drums, fiddles, harmonium, discos, etc and have regarded them as permissible. This is completely incorrect because singing and musical instruments, in the light of the Sharî'ah, are *harâm*, and there is special emphasis to abstain from them, as has already passed. The permission of the duff is for the purpose of announcing the Nikâh. Therefore to base one's deductions on this is not correct.

Nourishment for the Soul

Some people in trying to prove the permissibility of music and singing present the following proof that "music is nourishment for the soul". This is also wrong since an impermissible thing can never be nourishment for the soul; just as a pig and cat are *harâm* (impermissible) and cannot therefore be food for man.

Then, if one ponders carefully, nourishment is that thing which leads to growth in the body after eating and is not harmful to the body, for example, grains, rice, vegetables, *halâl* meats, fruits, etc have been determined as man's nourishment. No one says that bran, fodder, insects, snakes, scorpions, alcohol and heroine are means of nourishment for man, because these things are harmful to man's body and his health.

In the same manner, due to music, man's sexual and lustful desires are raised, preparing him for voluptuousness and immorality which is very harmful for man's soul. Harmful things cannot be nourishment. Therefore to regard music to be nourishment for the soul is incorrect.

To Listen to and Sing Qawwâlî

Some people regard listening to music and singing as a sin, but they do not regard listening to and singing *qawwâlî* as a sin. For this reason, they listen to *qawwâlî* without care. In fact on some auspicious days, people do not play music but in its place, listen to and sing *qawwâlî*. Thus from the 1st Muharram till the 10th, from the 1st of Rabî'ul Awwal till the 12th, or in Ramadân, or on the 15th of Sha'bân, *qawwâlî* is heard in place of music.

Some regard this as a means of reward. They have their 'gathering of *qawwâlî*' in which famous *qawwâlls* are called, who sing *qawwâlî* the entire night and who receive huge sums of money as payment. The proof which these people

present of its permissibility is that very great *buzurgs* (saints) used to listen to *qawwâlî*, therefore we listen to it, whereas those *buzurgs* regarding whom it is proven that they would listen to *qawwâlî* had a few conditions for listening, which are as follows:

1) The one singing must not be a beardless youngster or a woman.
2) The subject matter of the *qawwâlî* poems must not be immoral or contrary to the Sharî'ah.
3) The one singing the *qawwâlî* must be doing it for Allâh's pleasure. His purpose must not be to earn wages for it.
4) Those listening to the *qawwâlî* must be pious and upright. He should not be a *fâsiq* (open sinner), *fâjir* (immoral person), a person who does not follow Dîn but follows his desires and shaytân.
5) Together with the *qawwâlî*, there should not be any duff, drums, fiddles, etc.

In present day *qawwâlîs*, these conditions are not found at all. Therefore, to sing and listen to *qawwâlî* in today's times is ***harâm*** (impermissible) and to abstain from it is ***wâjib*** (compulsory).

Participation in such Gatherings in which there is Music

Today, music and singing has become so common that in most wedding ceremonies and other happy occasions, music is played. In fact, in some areas, music is played so loudly on these occasions that it echoes throughout the area and all the residents of that area become involved in this unexpected calamity since no one can study, make *tilâwat*, *ibâdat, zikr, du'â* or even rest. By causing harm to others in this manner is an additional sin and is *harâm* (prohibited). It is not permissible to attend such functions, no matter how bad the organizers of the function feel. One should not care about them, since it is not permissible to make any person happy by displeasing Allâh ﷻ.

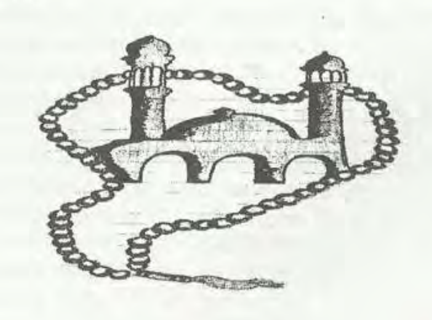
The Reward of Not Listening To Music

Hadrat Ibn Abbâs ﷺ has narrated that Nabî ﷺ said, "On the day of Qiyâmah, Allâh ﷻ will say, "Where are those people who (in the world) protected their ears hearing satanic music and their eyes from looking at singers/musicians? Separate them from all the people. The angels will separate them and seat them on mounts of musk and amber. Thereafter Allâh ﷻ will command the angels, "Let them hear My pure and Majestic hymns!" The angels will then recite to them the Zikr of Allâh ﷻ in such a beautiful (and melodious) voice which they never heard before." *(Jam'ul Fawâid)*

Note: Therefore one should abstain from singing, listening to music, looking at musicians and participating in such functions in which music is being played. We should abstain from music whether sung by a man or woman whether directly or by means of radio, T.V. or cassettes, so that we can saved from the punishment of listening to it and can acquire the above-mentioned reward. Only Allâh ﷻ can grant ability to abstain.

وصلي الله علي نبينا محمد وآله وأصحابه وسلم

Muftî Abdur-Raûf Sakhrawî (May Allâh ﷻ forgive him)
27 Zul Qa'dah 1416




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